

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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INFO SIT-REP COLLECTIVE PRIORITY 111

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

USNMR SHAPE BELGIUM

CINCUSNAVEUR, LONDON ENG

CINCUSAFE RAMSTEIN AB GER

CIA WASHDC

COMSIXTHFLT

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COM THREE FOUR MAU

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FICEURLANT NORFOLK VA

FOSIF ROTA SPAIN

DIA WASHDC

CINCUSAREUR HEIDELBERG GER

USDOCOSOUTH NAPLES IT

C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIRUT 7628

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MILI, PINS, PINT, LE

SUBJECT: LEBANESE SITUATION SEPTEMBER 23

REF: BEIRUT 7621

1. SUMMARY. ELIAS SARKIS SWORN IN AS PRESIDENT AT CHTAURA
PARLIAMENTARY SESSION DESPITE BOYCOTT OF CEREMONY BY

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SOME DEPUTIES. PM KARAME ACCUSES FRANGIE OF HAVING

"DESTROYED THE STATE AND ITS INSTITUTIONS." BECHIR GEMAYEL AGAIN ANNOUNCES UNIFIED RIGHTIST COMMAND. ABU IYAD SAYS FATAH HAS ARRESTED SYRIAN "PROVOCATEURS." SYRIAN ENVOY KHOLI ACCUSES PALESTINIANS OF NOT WISHING SOLUTION TO LEBANESE CRISIS. TENSIONS HIGH IN ALL AREAS BUT MILITARY ACTIVITY GENERALLY CONFINED TO SMALL-SCALE CLASHES AND HEAVY BOMBARDMENTS. END SUMMARR.

2. INAUGURATION DAY. ELIAS SARKIS ATTENDED MORNING "PASSING OF POWERS" CEREMONY AT ZOUK AND THEN WENT TO CHTAURA FOR PARLIAMENTARY SWEARING IN. ABOUT 65 DEPUTIES ATTENDED, MAINLY FROM CHRISTIAN AREAS AND SHIITES OF SOUTH LEBANON AND THE BEKAA. L'ORIENT LE JOUR SAYS CABINET EXPECTED PRESENT RESIGNATION AFTER SARKIS SWEARING IN. SECURITY BEING PROVIDED BY PRO-SYRIAN VANGUARDS OF THE LEBANESE ARMY, UNITS OF WHICH HAVE BEEN POSITIONED ALONG MAIN ROAD FROM SOFAR TO CHTAURA.

3. OPPOSITION TO CHTAURA INAUGURATION. PRIME MINISTER KARAME SEP 22 JOINED THOSE WHO SAY THEY WILL NOT ATTEND THE PARLIAMENTARY GATHERING. KARAME DISAPPROVES OF INAUGURAL SITE AND PROCEDURE. SUPREME ISLAMIC COUNCIL AND NATIONAL UNION FRONT (NUF) ALSO DENOUNCE CHTAURA CHOICE, LATTER ISSUING STATEMENT THAT SELECTION OF CHTAURA "CONSTITUTES AN ATTACK ON NATIONAL DIGNITY AND THE TEXT AND PRINCIPLES OF THE CONSTITUTION." NUF DEPUTIES WHO SAY THEY WILL NOT ATTEND INCLUDE RAYMOND EDDE AND SAEB SALAM. EDDE PUBLICLY ADVISES SARKIS NOT TO BE SWORN IN "UNDER THE PROTECTION OF THE SYRIAN ARMY."

4. SARKIS TO SPEAK. FIRST SARKIS ADDRESS TO NATION SCHEDULED FOR BROADCAST SEP 23. L'ORIENT-LE JOUR SAYS MESSAGE ALREADY TAPED AND CONTAINS: 1) REFERENCE TO COMING REFORMS TO ESTABLISH SOCIAL JUSTICE, INSURE LEBANON IS NO LONGER "LAND OF COMMUNITIES," AND GIVE OPPORTUNITY TO YOUTH; 2) COMMENTS ON "SACRED VALUES" OF UNITY AND PEOPLE AND TERRITORY AND THE DEMOCRATIC SYSTEM; 3) SUPPORT FOR CAIRO ACCORD AND MESSAGE TO PALESTINIANS THAT LEBANON READY TO HELP THEM REGAIN CONFIDENTIAL

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THEIR RIGHTS AND COUNTRY; AND 4) EXPRESSION OF GRATITUDE TO ARAB STATES FOR ASSISTANCE TO LEBANON. L'ORIENT LE JOUR QUOTES SARKIS THAT, "FOR NOW I HAVE NOTHING OF OFFER TO THE LEBANESE, EXCEPT THE PROSPECT OF REBUILDING LEBANON."

5. KARAME VS. FRANGIE. PM RASHID KARAME DESCRIBES FRANGIE FAREWELL MESSAGE AS "AN ACT OF DEFENSE FOR A

REGIME WHICH HAS DESTROYED THE STATE AND ITS INSTITUTIONS, STABILITY, SECURITY AND PROSPERITY." HE ACCUSES FRANGIE OF CORRUPTION, NEPOTISM, INSULTING OF ARAB AMBASSADORS AND STEALING OF RELIEF FUNDS INTENDED FOR SOUTH LEBANON.

6. SABER RATTLING. BECHIR GEMAYEL, IN ADDRESS TO REPRESENTATIVES OF KATAEB, NLP, GUARDIANS OF CEDARS NEND THE TANZIM, AGAIN ANNOUNCES PLANS FOR UNIFIED RIGHTIST MILITARY COMMAND. HE SAYS "ARMY FOR DEFENSE OF LEBANON" WILL NUMBER 3,000 FIGHTERS IN THREE MONTHS, "AND THEN THE LIBERATION OF LEBANON WILL BE POSSIBLE." FATAH'S ABU IYAD IN AS SAFIR INTERVIEW DENIES "SYRIAN REPORTS" OF SPLIT IN FATAH LEADERSHIP, SAYING "FATAH HAS ARRESTED SYRIAN AGENTS ASSIGNED TO SUBVERSIVE ACTIONS IN LEBANON." SYRIAN ENVOY COL. MOHAMMAD KHOLI, WHO MET SEP 22 WITH FRANGIE, IMPLICITLY BLAMES FAILURE OF SYRIAN/PALESTINIAN/LEBANESE MEETINGS ON PALESTINIANS.

7. SOVIETS AND THE LEFT. AS SAFIR QUOTES "INFORMED DIPLOMATIC SOURCES" TO EFFECT THAT RECENT SOVIET MESSAGES TO ARAFAT AND JUNBLATT SAY SOVIETS CONTINUE TO PRESSURE SYRIA TO WITHDRAW FORCES FROM LEBANON BUT CAUTION THAT SYRIAN WITHDRAWAL WILL TAKE LONG TIME.

8. GROUND SITUATION. TENSION HIGH IN BEIRUT. RESIDENTIAL AREA SHELLING ON SEP 22. CENTER CITY CONFRONTATION LINE ACTIVE, INCLUDING BATTLE AT MINISTRY OF FINANCE BUILDING ON BECHARA EL-KHOURI STREET. HEAVY SHELLING CONTINUES IN SOUTHEAST SUBURBS. WE UNDERSTAND A SELF-IMPOSED CEASE-FIRE BY SOME PALESTINIAN UNITS REFLECTS DESIRE NOT TO IMPEDE SARKIS TAKEOVER. IN NORTH, FIGHTING REPORTED AT DENNYE, TRIPOLI/ZGHORTA AND BAHSASS FRONTS. WE UNDERSTAND SHIP CARRYING CONFIDENTIAL

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BUTAGAS CONTAINERS DID EXPLODE AND SINK IN TRIPOLI HARBOR SEP 21, SETTING FIRDRTO WAREHOUSE FACILITIES. FIRE STILL OUT OF CONTROL LATE SEP 22. IN MOUNTAINS THERE WERE CLASHES AT ALEY/KAHALE AND SHELLING IN SEVERAL AREAS. FIGHTING REPORTED AT KARM EL-OUARAK AND CHMESTAR ON OUYOUNE EL-SIMANE/BAALBEK ROAD, WITH SEVERAL BEIRUT PAPERS SUGGESTING PALESTINIAN ATTEMPT TO INTERFERE WITH INAUGURATION CEREMONY. IN THE SOUTH, PSP ELEMENTS REPORTED BY PRESS TO HAVE KIDNAPED SEVERAL CHRISTIANS AT AIN ZHALTA AND BURNED THEIR HOUSES. POSITIONS OF PALESTINIAN/LEFT SHELLED AT DAHR EL-RAMLE, HOMSYE, ROUN, WADI BESRI, ANNANE AND AIN EL-MIR. WE UNDERSTAND SHI'A VILLAGERS CLASHED WITH PALESTINIANS AND COMMUNISTS AT BINT JBAIL SEP 22. LANE

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